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FM AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
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INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L OUAGADOUGOU 000665

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/21/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [UV](#)

SUBJECT: COMPAORE: ARBITRATOR OF REGIONAL CONFLICTS.

Classified By: CDA Samuel C. Laeuchli for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1.(C) SUMMARY: President Compaore has worked hard in recent years to develop his image as peace mediator for West Africa. Actively involved in advancing the peace processes in Cote d'Ivoire and in Togo, he is also an interlocutor in Guinea and to some extent Gabon. Compaore's mediation is intended to forge his reputation as a pan-African statesman and overcome the legacy of his earlier, more controversial involvement in regional conflicts. In the past few weeks, Ouagadougou has seen a flurry of mediation activity with Compaore at its center as facilitator. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) President Compaore has put himself in the limelight in his role as arbitrator of regional conflicts. He has also been involved to some degree in the electoral process in Guinea, Mauritania and Gabon. In recent weeks, the President of Burkina Faso has hosted a number of key meetings in Ouagadougou that have served to reaffirm his peace-broker stature and distance himself further from his regional interventions. West and Central African heads of State and opposition leaders have approached him for "counsel" and to help initiate dialogue. Ouagadougou and the Burkinabe Presidency have become a preferred stop for conflict resolution in the region.

13. (SBU) On August 9, Compaore hosted the seventh meeting of the Ivorian evaluation committee (Ouagadougou Political Accord). Compaore remains dedicated to the Ivorian peace process and has said he would remain actively involved in it until a final resolution. In Togo, Compaore's mediation has been aimed at keeping the political process on track. On July 28 Compaore went to Lome to see President Faure Gnassingbe and received updates on the political process. Most recently (4-7 August) the ruling Togolese RPT party and the two main opposition parties UFC and CAR requested Compaore's assistance to advance the stuttering political agreement.

14. (SBU) On August 10, Captain Moussa Dadis Camara sent Guinean Defense Minister General Sekouba Konate to Ouagadougou to solicit Compaore for support. Gabonese Minister of Communication Laure Olga Gondjout also met with Compaore on August 10 to discuss media coverage of the upcoming Gabonese presidential elections and rising political tensions in Gabon.

15. (C) COMMENT: It appears that Compaore is simultaneously focusing on his short, medium and long-term image and legacy, and he is probably attempting to write a history for himself that portrays him as a peace builder. In the short term, Compaore's facilitation raises the profile of his Presidency and puts Burkina Faso on the political map. In the medium term, Compaore reaps political benefits from that very same international exposure. He becomes a reputable statesman, and this stature finds an echo in domestic politics where he can use it for internal political clout. Finally in the long term, as Compaore works to forge his post-presidency legacy, his mediation efforts may focus the judgment of history on the constructive peace-building efforts of recent years rather than his past involvement in regional conflicts. END

COMMENT.
LAEUCHLI